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1. The Hydrographic Service in the USSR was under the jurisdiction of the Soviet Navy. Members of the crew of a hydrographic ship were civilian naval employees, but the captain and radio operator were naval officers.
2. SGE (Severni Gidrographicheskaya Ekspeditsiya - Northern Hydrographic Expedition), despite the literal meaning of its name, was an organization, located in Archangelsk, which acted as a base for various hydrographic expeditions. It operated four hydrographic ships, the names of which all began with "M". They were the "Migalka" (flashing buoy), "Mgla" (heavy haze), "Maroz" (frost), and "Menzula" (a northern geographic place name). The hydrographic ship "Ost", from Leningrad, joined the 1938 expedition, which included the other four ships. Their mission was to re-survey water depths and shore lines in the White Sea and along the western shore of the Kanin Poluostrov (peninsula) near the Barents Sea. Usually three or four ships worked together if they were far from shore; if near shore, then one was used. the activities of this expedition were typical of other Soviet hydrographic expeditions.
3. The "Migalka" of 1938, first took hydrographic personnel and materials to various stations along the eastern part of the White Sea. Then, in about June 1938, the ship went to Ponoï, on the eastern shore of the Kolskiy Poluostrov (Kola Peninsula). Ponoï is a fishing station. (no families live there) and also has military and hydrographic stations. There is an installation of the Coast Guard (which is under the NKVD) there. There are small lighthouses all along the Kolski Poluostrov. Each large lighthouse (mayak) was equipped with a radio receiver and transmitter, generator, and meteorological equipment; some also had lifeboats. These lighthouses and their equipment were similar to those found in Western countries, as the USSR adhered to international lighthouse standards.

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the "List of Lights", a publication of the US Hydrographic Office, lists Soviet lighthouses and provides detailed information about them⁷.

4. Personnel of the "Migalka" built wooden towers, about 20 meters in height, at Ponoï, so that survey work could be done. The ship returned to Archangelsk for supplies and then went to Morzhovets Island to build more survey towers. The ship's last mission on that expedition was to go to Kanin Nos (cape) to take aboard hydrographic personnel and materials and return them to Archangelsk.
5. There were only a few fishing and hunting stations on Kanin Nos. The real villages were located primarily on the Zimni Bereg (Winter Shore), north of Archangelsk. These were typical Russian northern villages, with the inhabitants engaged in farming, fishing, and hunting. The inhabitants were free, ie, not exiles or prison labor. The great slave labor camps were located far to the east on the Pechora River. They produced lumber and coal. Sosnovets Island and Morzhovets Island in the White Sea were uninhabited, except that there was a large lighthouse on each island. The northwest tip of Kanin Nos had a very large lighthouse. Usually meteorological stations were found on lighthouses and in coastal villages, as their services were needed by the Coast Guard. The Solovetskiy Islands in the White Sea were inhabited by concentration camp inmates. The prisoners were fairly idle as no activities such as production of lumber or coal existed there.

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